



Mr. Frank Foote, Director
Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
1310 G Street, NW Room 200 East
Washington, D.C. 20220

Re: Request for extension of Public Comment Period
Proposed Paso Robles Westside Viticultural Area – Notice No. 71

Dear Mr. Foote:

I am a member of the Paso Robles AVA Committee that is comprised of 59 growers and vintners in the Paso Robles AVA. I respectfully request a 30 day extension in the comment period on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice 71) for the proposed establishment of the Paso Robles Westside Viticultural Area.

The next meeting of the committee is March 9th. We are unable to meet before that time because the majority of the members' schedules and the unavailability of our experts, Richard Mendelsohn of the law firm Dickenson, Peatman, and Fogarty, who will be abroad until March 5th, and Deborah Elliott-Fisk, of the University of California, Davis. There is insufficient time after the March 9th meeting to assemble and review our own scientific evidence regarding the Paso Robles Westside area to prepare and submit detailed comments.

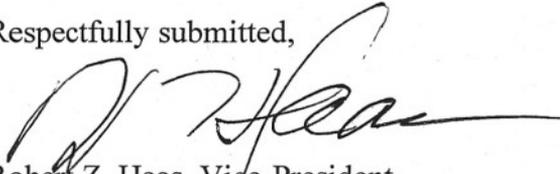
In addition to belonging to the committee, I am a General Partner of Tablas Creek Vineyard, a west side winery. We are concerned about the divisive nature of the proposal and its lumping together viticultural soils and climates and elevations that are quite diverse; that will tend to confuse rather than educate the average consumer.

We feel that the extensive work of the Paso Robles AVA committee and its experts will result in proposals that will be better backed by scientific evidence and clarify the different soils, climates and elevations of the diverse Paso Robles vineyard areas rather than confuse them.

We feel that the many wineries and growers located in the effected areas need more time to examine the proposals and comment on them. March 26th, the current date of closing will not give them enough time to thoughtfully respond.

For the above reasons, we request an 30 day extension of the comment period on the proposed Paso Robles Westside AVA.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Haas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Z. Haas, Vice-President
Haas Vineyard Company, General Partner